



## ***TASK FORCE LIBERTY*** ***Press Release***

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**FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, Iraq** – The currents of governance continue to grow in Task Force Liberty's area of operations while the roots of infrastructure take hold and Iraqi security forces take the fight to the insurgents.

In Baqubah, Governor Ra'ad, the Deputy Governor and selected members of the Provincial Council signed the Provincial Charter to formalize it and communicate its significance to the public during a ceremony in the Governor's office July 14. Diyala is the first province in Iraq to produce a provincial charter. Written by the Provincial Council, reviewed by the judiciary and signed by the governor, the charter is similar to a state constitution.

In Khanaqin, sheiks, imams, muqtar's and tribal leaders from all over the Diyala district attended a meeting July 5 to discuss community responsibilities in security and economic development. Over 150 people attended, and a guest speaker from Kallar College encouraged the participation of all leaders in the area.

Renovations to the School of Al Arabee in Muqdadiyah, which will significantly upgrade the building, began recently. The project calls for improvements to the walls, floors and roof of the building, as well as new water pipes, drinking fountains, bathrooms and lights. The cost of the upgrades is \$100,000.

For the first time in recent memory, students can continue their education through the summer. The Tikrit Childhood Organization Summer School Program officially opened on July 15. The summer school is the result of a group of teachers who thought the children needed a program to continue their learning.

Also in Tikrit, soldiers of the 445th Civil Affairs team met with engineers July 9 to discuss the progress of a cold storage facility being constructed for local Iraqis to store fruits and vegetables until distribution.

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Iraqi soldiers conducted Operation Cobra Strike July 6. Eleven caches were discovered and eight individuals were detained in the search of homes in the Al Shahabi village. The fields and orchards in the area were also searched.

Iraqi soldiers learned a new technique of mission planning with assistance from the 278th Regimental Combat Team July 3. Iraqi Army soldiers learned how to improve mission planning and preparation using a terrain model. This training will give the soldiers planning techniques to prepare them for future missions, such as security and stability operations. Iraqi non-commissioned officers trained new Iraqi soldiers on individual weapon firing positions July 7. Coalition Forces observed and assisted only when needed.

### **Breaking the Cycle of Violence**

In the last two weeks, operations in the Task Force Liberty area of operations have resulted in an estimated nine anti-Iraqi forces killed, seven wounded and an additional 311 detained. Significant ammunition seized included more than 1,534 rocket, mortar, artillery and tank rounds, 146 small arms weapons and grenades, 5,940 rounds of small arms ammunition, 28 mines, 10 rocket propelled grenade (RPG) launchers and 282 RPG rounds. Major equipment found included a sniper rifle, 261 anti-aircraft rounds, 623 assorted fuses, 33 pounds of explosives, seven machine guns, five cell phones, a laptop and several passports. Operations have also seized and \$20,145 and \$227,000 worth of Iraqi Dinars. Within the division's area of responsibility, 66 improvised explosive devices were discovered prior to detonation, preventing the needless loss of life at the hands of anti-Iraqi forces.

**1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team (Raider).** Soldiers from the Fort Stewart-based 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team (BCT) continue to monitor signs of progress throughout their area of operations.

Salah Ad Din Province is seeing improvements every day in the quality of roads. A road improvement project, funded by the Iraqi Transitional Government, was well underway on Route 1 north of Bayji in early July. Asphalt overlay work is also being done in the north bound lanes of Route 1 between Tikrit and Bayji.

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The Samarra City Council chairman spoke out against terrorism on a radio program earlier this month. Sheikh Taha Hassen Jasim recorded the message at his office July 7. He expressed support for the upcoming elections, denounced terrorism and those that kill innocent people. He also requested funding and other Iraqi government support. He also appealed to the citizens of Samarra to build a stronger city by participating in the political process.

Iraqi army soldiers continue to work to keep Samarra secure from insurgents. Members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade's 1<sup>st</sup> Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Army Battalion set up a traffic control point in Samarra July 7. The soldiers focused on searching cars for materials similar to those used in making roadside and car bombs.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team (Sledgehammer).** In order to promote security and set the conditions for the national constitutional referendum, Iraqi security forces and 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT's soldiers continued their counter-insurgency mission - Operation Sunrise. Begun in June, it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT and Iraqi army's most comprehensive full spectrum operation to date.

Iraqi army leadership obtained intelligence in early July that indicated as many as 36 insurgents were seeking sanctuary in the village of Sayyid Awaad. Iraqi army elements conducted a time-sensitive operation that resulted in the recovery of a machine gun, a mortar tube and IED-making materials. The Iraqi soldiers detained 15 men who tested positive for handling explosives.

On July 8, a civilian indicated that there was a terror cell in the area with a weapons cache. The civilian led the patrol to two houses where they detained three of four cell members. The cache contained over 30 mortar rounds, two mortar tubes, two RPG launchers with rounds, machine guns and IED-making materials. The next day, nine individuals were detained and one machine gun and \$1,480,000 Iraqi Dinars were found. Three days later, Iraqi soldiers conducted another intelligence-based raid which yielded 46 RPG warheads, three 120mm artillery rounds, 30 hand grenades, three mortar sights, 10 blasting caps and six detainees, including one wanted terrorist.

Iraqi army units raided six additional targets on July 13, detaining five personnel. Another Iraqi army battalion conducted a cordon and search operation on two objectives

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near the village of Aswad, which resulted in the detention of 10 personnel, seven of whom are wanted terrorists.

Iraqi army soldiers launched multiple searches against suspected insurgent targets in Muqdadia and Tahir on July 16 for the third phase of Operation Sunrise. The simultaneous raids resulted in 63 detainees.

These ongoing operations by Iraqi army and police have put pressure on the insurgency while developing the command and control skills of Iraqi leadership. There has not been a single suicide attack in Diyala Province since Operation Sunrise began.

**116<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team (Warrior).** A ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the return of the International Boy Scouts, or Kashafa, to Iraq took place in Hisar July 7 – another among the many signs of progress in the 116<sup>th</sup> BCT's area of operations.

The City of Kirkuk held a Religious Tolerance Conference July 6, which united religious representatives to foster peace within the religious community. Taza Mosque held its grand opening July 8.

On July 8, Iraqi soldiers in Kirkuk moved into a new barracks. A local contractor built the barracks and a project officer from 2nd Battalion, 116th Armor ensured the work was completed to standard. In Riyadh, the Iraqi government started a multi-million dollar project July 10 to restructure and pave roads. The same day, Riyadh Technical School underwent extensive remodeling with funding from Coalition Forces.

Over 40 business owners, future business owners and entrepreneurs attended the Business Development Seminar July 13 to discuss future projects. They offered insights into business success, Kirkuk Business Center programs and financial opportunities, including loans for businesses. A grants manager for the Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA) discussed business grants in the \$3,000 to \$50,000 range.

In Kirkuk, representatives from the Iraqi police, Iraqi army, Provincial Joint Coordination Center and hospital, fire and ambulance services attended the Iraqi Elections Security meeting July 13 to discuss improvement of security at future Iraq elections. The leaders intend to hold regular election security meetings at various locations throughout the Kirkuk Province until the election process is complete.

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Engineers from the water, sewer and municipality directorates are working together to complete two projects in Kirkuk: the landfill and the water project. At a meeting on July 17 at the Project Coordination Center, it was announced the landfill project has received all the equipment needed to move into its next phase. Meanwhile, the construction of a high lift pump station in Dibbis is necessary for the Kirkuk water project. The provincial government strongly supports these projects to improve living conditions in Kirkuk.

Security remains a concern throughout the 116<sup>th</sup> BCT's area of operations and Iraqi security forces are addressing it. Based on a tip from a local citizen, Meghdad police located an explosive device July 6. The police cleared the area and the Iraqi army successfully disarmed the device. On July 9 police officers in Kirkuk Province stepped up patrols to search, locate and detain terrorists. The officers urged any Iraqi citizen with information about terrorists' locations or activities to report it to their Joint Coordination Center.

One Iraqi civilian was killed and 18 were wounded when a VBIED detonated outside the Kirkuk Hospital July 10. Soldiers of the Iraqi army, working with the Iraqi police and Coalition Forces cordoned the area and discovered a second VBIED. They destroyed it without injury to civilians, police, or military personnel. In Kirkuk, Soldiers of 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 116<sup>th</sup> Armor and Adaylla police conducted a combined patrol and "Knock and Greet" operation July 14. At one residence, soldiers and police discovered quantities of wire, batteries and other electrical components not typical of a normal household. They also confiscated a technical manual and logbooks of military equipment. The patrol detained two individuals, transporting them to the Adaylla Police Station for further questioning. The same day, Iraqi police responded to an IED attack that targeted Coalition Forces returning from a mission. The Meghdad Police and the emergency service unit arrived on site to assist with security.

In Al Wasity, two terrorists inadvertently blew themselves up July 15. Iraqi police say the men were attempting to park their explosive-laden vehicle when it exploded. Police say no other injuries occurred as a result of the blast.

Citing improved security in Kirkuk Province, many people are moving in and setting up homes. One family recently moved to Rashad City and was able to find work. The

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employment allowed the family to buy a plot of land and build a home. The homeowner said that he feels safe in Kirkuk and says dedicated Iraqi security forces are making life better.

**278<sup>th</sup> Regimental Combat Team (The Volunteers).** The 278<sup>th</sup> Regimental Combat Team (RCT) from the Tennessee Army National Guard continues to assist the Iraqi people in developing a self-governing state.

Renovations to the Joint Coordination Center in Khanaquin were completed on July 3. The renovations were initiated with help from soldiers from I Troop, 3<sup>rd</sup> Squadron, 278<sup>th</sup> RCT. A new wing was built, including a new conference room, latrines, showers, and sleeping quarters. All offices received new wiring, paint, and lighting, and tile was placed throughout the building. A security wall was built to fortify the perimeter, the parking area was paved and the building exterior was repainted.

In Jalula, a bank has been organized to serve local Iraqis. The Rafidain Bank is open Sunday through Thursday and employs 32 people. The bank offers a six percent interest rate on savings accounts, operates as a currency exchange and allows customers to pick up their monthly government stipends. The bank services the surrounding cities of Sadiyah, Tebij, Sheik Baba and several other small villages.

On July 8 a local citizen provided information on insurgent activity which led to a raid on a shop in the Balad Ruz marketplace. The raid resulted in the detention of two men and the capture of five rifles, and numerous radios, wires, batteries and other IED-making materials.

**42<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Brigade (Eagle).** Weather permitting, Task Force Eagle is supporting Task Force Liberty's ground forces with its lift, attack and scout units. Recent dust storms have reduced the visibility required to fly in the area of operations. Since the beginning of the month, the 42<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Brigade has flown approximately 4,000 hours.

Throughout Task Force Liberty's area of operations, the Apaches and Kiowa Warriors of the Aviation Brigade are mobile firepower. The attack battalion and the cavalry squadron performed reconnaissance, security and direct support missions for the soldiers on the ground. Their additional firepower gives flexibility to ground

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commanders and security to their soldiers. The 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 229<sup>th</sup> Attack Helicopter and 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry supported the brigade combat teams in every corner of the Task Force Liberty area of operations.

The lift helicopter battalions, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 150<sup>th</sup> Aviation and 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 140<sup>th</sup> Aviation, supported the division task force with numerous battlefield circulation and air assault missions. The UH-60s flew more than 1,700 hours. Like the attack and the air cavalry, the lift assets supported the brigades throughout the airspace of North-Central Iraq.

The 642<sup>nd</sup> Division Aviation Support Battalion continues to work around the clock in conjunction with the battalion maintenance soldiers to keep aircraft flying. In part due to the brigade's extremely high operational tempo, the unit remains busy with both scheduled and unscheduled aircraft maintenance. Meanwhile, the brigade's Outcast Express task force has done an exceptional job ensuring the brigade receives required aviation and ground repair parts in a timely manner.

**Division Engineers (Detonator).** Task Force Trailblazer of the 467th Engineer Battalion finds a large percentage of the IEDs that are placed on the main supply routes used by coalition forces. These teams patrol seven days a week, maintaining mobility throughout Task Force Liberty's area of operations by finding and neutralizing the IEDs and UXOs. The effort of these soldiers is saving lives. The specialized equipment (Buffalo, Husky, Meerkat, RG-31) is designed to provide a safe observation platform and some protection for them to perform their duties.

Soldiers of the 793rd Engineer Detachment (Utility) and Company C, 983rd Engineer Battalion continue to work to improve force protection and quality of life, including plumbing and electrical upgrades. They are also assisting in base closures and transfers to the Iraqi army. Daily these soldiers install, repair and improve infrastructure that makes life safer and more bearable for everyone.

The Engineer Brigade works with the Iraqi Ministers of Power, Buildings-Health & Education, Security & Justice, Transportation and Oil. They are responsible for the development of the numerous projects to improve living conditions for the Iraqi people. They are also involved with designing protection measures for the systems

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infrastructure. Much of this effort is directed at teaching the Iraqi people how to build and manage the systems themselves.

**Division Support Command (Muleskinner).** Soldiers in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Division Support Command (DISCOM) are providing logistics support to both the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division and the growing Iraqi security forces.

Coordination with the forward support battalions streamlines the flow of all classes of supply and combat equipment to Iraqi Security Forces. As the Iraqi forces grow and equipment continues to roll in, more personnel from DISCOM headquarters company have been directed to manage that logistics flow. Through direct coordination with the division operations section, many items of equipment are processed and issued to the appropriate Iraqi army unit.

The movement control section is busy planning the movement of 50<sup>th</sup> Main Support Battalion (MSB) convoys and working with the division transportation officer and the Corps movement control officer to clear military congestion on Iraq's dangerous roadways. During the past two weeks, the 50<sup>th</sup> MSB lost a soldier and several vehicles to IEDs. Despite this and other challenges, the battalion soldiers continue to man their trucks and travel thousands of miles on the supply routes in our area. Their total miles exceed 780,000. During the past week, the 50<sup>th</sup> MSB fulfilled 36 transportation movement requests, bringing the total to 1,205, in addition to normal sustainment combat logistics patrols, now a routine mission in North-Central Iraq.

The 42<sup>nd</sup> DISCOM is leading the way in base closure operations in recent weeks. Coordinated by the Support Operations Cell, the 50<sup>th</sup> MSB provided transportation and labor to move soldiers and equipment off bases. Later this month, Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) Dagger, Omaha and Scunion will be transferred to Iraqi army control. That transfer requires the removal of U.S. Forces equipment, many protective barrier walls and other equipment deemed necessary to continue the mission and provide security soldiers relocating to other FOBs. The effort relies heavily on heavy equipment transport and crane support assets coordinated through the 13<sup>th</sup> Corps Support Battalion. Those soldiers have kept base transfers on schedule throughout the summer.

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The 42<sup>nd</sup> DISCOM and the 13<sup>th</sup> Corps Support Battalion are merging the supply support missions of the 50<sup>th</sup> MSB and that of the 557<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company. After successfully completing staff planning with the 13<sup>th</sup> Corps Support Battalion on July 10, the consolidation began and progresses well. This will have a positive effect on the customers of both units and assist both units in their upcoming missions.

The 42<sup>nd</sup> DISCOM continues to provide much needed support throughout Task Force Liberty's area of operations. Logistics soldiers adapt to the changing battlefield. 42<sup>nd</sup> DISCOM adjusts its tactics, techniques and procedures based on the enemy in an effort to prevent or lessen injuries to soldiers, or the loss of needed supplies.

### **Conclusion**

Task Force Liberty and our Iraqi Security Force partners continue to help provide a safe and secure Iraq. We continue to work with the Iraqi Security Forces to neutralize the insurgency. We continue to train, coach and support the Iraqi Security Forces as they develop their own independent capabilities to defeat the insurgency and improve the quality of life for the Iraqi people. We believe in the future of Iraq. To our families, friends, employers and the American people, Task Force Liberty thanks you for your steadfast support and encouragement.

***Never Forget!***

**For more information on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty:**

**[www.42id.army.mil](http://www.42id.army.mil)**

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